

THE ANTICHRIST AND THE THIRD TEMPLE

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The following is excerpted from ***THE FUTURE ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE***. ISBN 978-1-58318-172-0. One of the many reasons why the Bible is the most amazing and exciting book on earth is its prophecies. The Bible unfolds the future in great detail, and *The Future According to the Bible* deals in depth with every major prophetic event, including the Rapture, the Judgment Seat of Christ, the Tribulation, the Antichrist, Gog and Magog, the Battle of Armageddon, the Two Witnesses, Christ's Return, Muslim nations in prophecy, the Judgment of the Nations, the resurrection body, the conversion of Israel, the highway of the redeemed, Christ's glorious kingdom, the Millennial Temple, the Great White Throne judgment, and the New Jerusalem. The first two chapters deal at length with the amazing prophecies that are being fulfilled today and with the church-age apostasy. Knowledge of these prophecies is essential for a proper understanding of the times and a proper Christian worldview today. The 130-page section on Christ's kingdom describes the coming world kingdom in more detail than any book we are familiar with. Every major Messianic prophecy is examined. Prophecy is a powerful witness to the Bible's divine inspiration, and it is a great motivator for holy Christian living. In this book we show that the Lord's churches are outposts of the coming kingdom. The believer's position in Christ's earthly kingdom will be determined by his service in this present world (Revelation 2:26-27; 3:21). The book is based on forty years of intense Bible study plus firsthand research in Israel, Turkey, and Europe. 520 pages. Available in print and eBook editions from Way of Life Literature, www.wayoflife.org.

Bible prophecy associates the Antichrist with the building of the Third Temple (2 Th. 2:3-4). (The First Temple was built by Solomon, and the Second Temple was built after the Jews returned from the Babylonian captivity and was extended and glorified by King Herod, so that it was called Herod's Temple.)

Great preparations are being made in Israel for the building of the Third Temple. The Temple Institute, founded in 1986, has prepared all of the articles, including a menorah (candlestick) fashioned from 95 pounds of gold (valued at \$2 million) and the high priest's golden crown costing \$30,000. When I visited Jerusalem in 2010, the menorah was on display on the Western Wall Plaza across from the Temple Mount. The Temple Institute is constructing a full-scale model of the Temple near the Dead Sea to use for training priests.

What Messiah are the Jews looking for?

The Jews today are looking for the Messiah, but the Messiah they are looking for is actually the Antichrist.

1. The Jews are looking for a Messiah that will rebuild the temple.

In Jewish tradition, the rebuilding of the temple is associated with the coming of the Messiah. According to Maimonides (also called Rambam), the highest rabbinical authority, any Jew that starts rebuilding the Temple is a potential Messiah. Shimon ben Kosiba was considered a Messiah in the second century A.D. when he led a revolt to recapture Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple. He was named Bar Kokhba ("Son of the Star") based on the Messianic prophecy of Numbers 24:17, and a coin was struck depicting the Temple with the Ark of the Covenant inside and the Messianic star on the roof.

A representative of the Temple Institute told us in 2010 that they are looking for a temple builder: “We are waiting for a Messiah. In Jewish tradition, we believe that in every generation there is someone who can be the Messiah. The question is who will he be. The answer is only someone who does specific things can be called the Messiah. The one who brings Israel back to Israel. The one who builds the temple again.”

By this tradition, it is simple to see how the Antichrist will be looked upon as the Messiah. He will come as a peacemaker and by his satanic power he will make a way for the Jewish Temple to be rebuilt in spite of Muslim animosity.

2. The Jews are looking for a Messiah that will solve their problems and bring peace when things look dark.

In a video interview in Jerusalem in 2010 a Reformed Jewish rabbi told us that the Messiah will come when things look really dark and will establish peace. He said:

“Jerusalem is to be whole, and when the Messiah comes the temple will be returned to us. But that can’t happen until there is eternal peace. Ultimately we have to go deeper into destruction before we come out into the light and until God redeems not only the Jewish people but also the rest of the world. Peace has to come, but peace can only come when things get really dark.”

But the Jewish prophets said there is no peace to the wicked (Isa. 57:21). There can be no peace for Israel until she is in right relationship with God, until she repents of her sin and is forgiven and converted. Until then, any so-called peace will turn out to be a false peace, which is exactly what the Antichrist will bring (1 Thess. 5:3).

3. The Jews are NOT looking for a Messiah who will save them from sin.

The Jews have no sacrifices, and they are content with that, thinking that they don't need a blood atonement. They celebrate the Passover and the Day of Atonement without a lamb and without the shedding of blood.

We asked a Reformed Jewish rabbi in Jerusalem, "How do you purge your sins?" and he replied, "We ask God for forgiveness through prayer and through actions." When queried about Leviticus 17:11--"it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul"--the rabbi said that to interpret that as meaning that man needs a literal blood sacrifice is a false interpretation.

A representative of the Temple Institute said the same thing:

"God knows that we don't have the sacrifices. That is why He has given us a different way of atonement, and that's by prayers. We have prayers that great rabbis wrote just after the destructions, and we say these prayers and that's as if we are sacrificing."

The Jews stumbled at the Suffering Messiah 2,000 years ago. They were looking for a Messiah to save them from Rome and to provide for their physical needs, not a Messiah who would die for their sins. They wanted a king, not a Saviour.

Why should they look for a suffering Messiah when they don't think of themselves as sinners? When we asked the aforementioned American rabbi if he is a sinner, he looked around in sort of a perplexed manner and even had to be asked the second time before admitting that "we all make mistakes in the world." But he only admitted to mistakes and "negative inclinations," not to sin. He said that the Jew's righteousness is in the law of Moses and in the Talmud, the rabbinical tradition.

This is the same self-righteous blindness that the apostle Paul wrote about 2,000 years ago in Romans 9:30-33.

"What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even

the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.”

Thus, the Jews are not looking for a Saviour from sin; they are looking for a Messiah that will bring peace, that will solve their problems, that will help them to rebuild the Temple, that will not rebuke them as sinners but will help them follow their “positive inclinations.”

Though they don’t know it, they are actually looking for the Antichrist and they will accept him when he comes.